

ÆTHELMEARC HISTORICAL COMBAT POLICIES

I. DEFINITION

The Historical Combat program exists to safely encourage and develop the study and recreation of European medieval martial arts within the Kingdom of Æthelmearc.

II. GOALS

- A. To expand the comprehensive understanding of documented medieval combat techniques to include historical grappling and weapon based fighting techniques both in and out of armor.
- B. To expand the comprehensive understanding of how arms and armor evolved in construction and use in different cultures and periods to include the efficacy of these weapons and armor in history.
- C. To expand the use of historical armor and techniques in SCA combat systems where appropriate and safe.

III. SCOPE

- A. These policies are primarily intended to establish minimum safety standards for historical combat related activities not covered under other specific Kingdom or Society marshal policies. Historical combat policies will apply to any form of hand to hand combat based activities involving more than one person.
 - 1. Individuals performing research and not attempting to practice or demonstrate martial techniques with other participants shall not fall under the scope of these policies.
 - 2. Multiple individuals participating in martial activities that do not involve person to person contact and/or weapons shall not fall under the scope of these policies.
- B. This program is not designed to be a free form or unscripted combat system within the Society for Creative Anachronism.

III. STRUCTURE

- A. Each level of participation or demonstration shall require prior authorization from the Historical Combat Deputy or appointed representatives.
 - 1. The Historical Combat Deputy shall maintain a record that contains, at minimum, names, approval level, and approval expiration date for all relevant participants.
 - 2. Approvals shall be good for 2 calendar years and may be revoked at any time by the Historical Combat Deputy, Kingdom Arts & Sciences Minister, Kingdom Seneschal, or reigning Monarchs.
- B. Participants are classified as Marshals or Players.
 - 1. A Player is an individual that is authorized to participate or demonstrate at a specified level of activity. Players are approved by appropriate Marshals.
 - 2. A Marshal is someone authorized to supervise or teach a class and approve players at a specified level of activity. Marshals are approved by the Historical Combat Deputy.
- C. Activity levels shall be defined as:
 - 1. Level 1 – Non-Contact
 - a. Anyone may train unsupervised.
 - b. This is an introductory level meant to focus on the basics of safety, theory, mechanics, footwork, falling, and similar non-contact activities.
 - 2. Level 2 - Hand to Hand (Grappling)
 - a. Anyone may train under the supervision of a Marshal.
 - b. Authorized Players may train unsupervised.
 - c. Grappling is defined as any strikes, pushes, trips, kicks, locks, throws or similarly related hand to hand techniques employed against an opponent.
 - 3. Level 3 - Weapon
 - a. Anyone may train under the supervision of a Marshal.
 - b. Authorized Players may train unsupervised.
- D. Authorizing in levels of Historical Combat
 - 1. To train unsupervised; Players must be authorized at level 2 & level 3.
 - a. The Historical Combat Deputy or an appointed representative shall conduct all authorizations.
 - 2. Players must demonstrate that they can participate safely.
 - 3. Players must have a solid understanding of the rules.

IV. SAFETY STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

A. General Safety

1. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate.
2. No one shall participate in Historical Combat related activities under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
3. Free form or competitive sparring is strictly prohibited.
4. Pre-orchestrated and coordinated plays may be established and practiced at speed and power by players at appropriate levels. Choreographed sequences may be used for approved demonstrations and classes.
5. Control is of utmost importance in training and demonstration situations. All practice techniques and activities shall be performed with the safety of all participants and spectators as the primary concern.
6. "Hold" calls shall be used to stop training activities. Anyone may call a hold.
7. Joint lock and grappling techniques are permitted at the appropriate level (Level 2 & Level 3).
8. Particular care should be taken so that joint lock techniques are not applied with such force as to cause injury. Appropriate hold calls or 'tapping' shall be used to stop technique applications and demonstrations.
9. Any marshal, due to safety concerns may prohibit any individual from participating.
10. Any marshal or instructor in charge may halt a class or demonstration due to safety concerns for participants or observers.

B. General Equipment

1. Athletic cups for groin protection are recommended at all levels.
2. Eye protection is recommended. Eye protection must be constructed of a shatter proof material consistent with athletic sport participation and meeting the American National Standards Institutes (ANSI) Z87.1 safety standard.
3. Equipment, weapons, and harnesses must follow fairly rigid living history appearance standards with particular emphasis during organized demonstrations.
 - a. Participants shall have a reasonably period and documentable appearance from the distance of 10 feet.
 - b. Exceptions to the appearance standards may be made by the marshal or instructor in charge. These can include concerns for safety with hand protection, eye wear, and footwear.
4. Marshals or instructors in charge may require additional protective equipment or clothing.

C. Level 3 Equipment Minimums (non-steel weapons)

1. Minimum armor requirements shall be set by the instructor or marshal in charge of the activity. These minimums could include the following:
 - a. Fencing mask with back of head protection.
 - b. Padded gorget or throat protection.
 - c. Padded gambeson or equivalent.
 - d. Hard elbow and knee protection.
 - e. Padded gloves.
 - f. Groin protection

D. Level 3 Equipment Minimums (steel weapons)

1. Helms shall be worn and meet Society minimum armored combat standards.
2. Helms shall be constructed of a minimum of 14g steel or equivalent material.
3. Helms shall have a closed face appearance which prevents a 1" dowel from entering into any of the face guard openings. Closed face equivalents are:
 - a. Sheet steel construction or Society equivalent
 - b. 3/16th" bar frame construction provided bars are covered and disguised with a steel mail drape or aventail.
 - c. Cut & Thrust approved perforated mesh faces.
4. Rigid steel protection or documentable equivalent shall be worn on the torso, elbows, knees, arms, thighs, and hands.
5. Rigid steel protection on the shoulders, shins, and feet is recommended.
6. Rigid steel protection shall be defined as 20g mild steel and 22g stainless or hardened high carbon steel.
7. A gorget or equivalent neck protection shall be worn.
 - a. Heavy leather with minimum ¼ inch padding.
 - b. Rigid steel or steel plated with leather (ie brigandine).
 - c. Steel mail drape with heavy fabric or leather reinforcement that fully covers the neck.
8. A minimum of ¼" heavy padded material shall be worn on the shoulders and shins when not protected by rigid steel.

E. Weapons

1. Weapons shall simulate a documentable historical weapon used in context of historical techniques.
2. No weapon may possess a sharpened edge. Wooden, rattan, plastic, and metal training weapons will be allowed but must be rebated or designed in such a way to make them appropriately safe for training.
3. Weapons shall be inspected before each use by players and marshals and periodically during combat activities to ensure that they are in good condition.

4. Weapons that have cracks, splits, jagged edges, burrs or other deformities shall not be used.
5. No compound weapons or weapons with a striking surface attached to a chain or rope shall be used (such as flails).
6. Thrown or fired weapons are prohibited. No projectiles.
7. Any marshal may prohibit a weapon they do not feel is safe.

F. Prohibited Techniques

1. The following techniques are prohibited as contact drills but may be practiced during non-contact training.
 - a. Face thrusting.
 - b. Any strikes to unarmored locations with steel weapons or to uncovered areas with other weapons.
 - c. Any strikes to the knees (including behind), groin, or neck.
 - d. Choking

V. INCIDENT AND ACCIDENT REPORTING & APPEALS

A. Injuries

1. If an injury occurs, the primary concern is for the well-being and care of the injured individual.
2. No conscious person may be forced to accept treatment.
3. The Kingdom Historical Combat Deputy, A&S Minister, and Seneschal must be notified of any injury within 24 hours that requires hospitalization or similar care, includes a period of unconsciousness, or may require future medical care.
 - a. The armored combat injury report form is a recommended report template.

B. Incidents

1. Any incident that requires the removal of any spectator, Player, Marshal or Instructor from a demonstration or class shall be reported to the Kingdom Historical Combat Deputy, A&S Minister, and Seneschal within 24 hours of the incident.
 - a. The armored combat incident report form is a recommended report template.

C. Appeals

1. Any individual wishing to appeal any enforcement of these policies should follow the chain of command below.
 - a. Marshal or Instructor
 - b. Marshal or Instructor in Charge
 - c. Historical Combat Deputy
 - d. Kingdom A&S Minister
 - e. King/Queen
 - f. Society A&S Minister